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AUTHOR Minami, Masahiko
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ABSTRACT

"Scaffolding" refers to the temporary support that parents and others give a child to perform a task. In narrative contexts, children's speech is guided and scaffolded by mothers who initiate and elicit children's contributions about past experiences. Unfortunately, data on this phenomenon from languages other than English are very limited. To fill this gap, this study explored how maternal patterns of narrative elicitation relate to young Japanese children's developing narrative discourse skill. Personal narratives of 20 middle-class Japanese preschoolers, ages 4 and 5, and their mothers were analyzed using the Labovian approach (Labov, 1972). Also, using a speech act coding system (McCabe and Peterson, 1991), conversations between the same 20 mother-child pairs were analyzed to study differences in narrative elicitation between mothers of 4- and 5-year-olds. Results in terms of developmental patterns indicated that: (1) compared to adults, young children emphasized a temporal sequence of action with less emphasis on nonsequential information, especially orientation; and (2) although 4-year-olds gave proportionately less evaluation than adults, no differences were observed between 5-year-olds and adults. In terms of social interaction aspects, mothers of children of different ages were found to use different techniques to elicit children's participation in narrative discourse; mothers of 4-year-old children requested more evaluation from their children than did mothers of older children. Results suggest that how mothers verbally interact with their young children during narrative elicitation is reflective of those children's developing narrative skills. (Contains 28 references.) (Author/EV)

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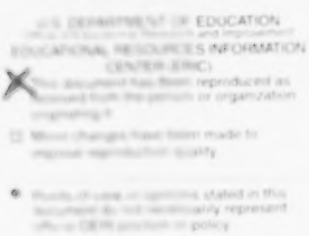

Narrative Styles of Japanese Mothers and Their Children

Masahiko Minami

San Francisco State University

Author's Address: Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures

College of Humanities

San Francisco State University

1600 Holloway Avenue

San Francisco, CA 94132

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Abstract

"Scaffolding" means the temporary support that parents and others give a child to perform a task (Bruner, 1977). In narrative contexts, children's speech is guided and scaffolded by mothers who initiate and elicit children's contributions about past experiences (Hudson, 1993). Unfortunately, data from languages other than English are very limited. To fill this gap, this study describes how maternal patterns of narrative elicitation relate to young Japanese children's developing narrative discourse skill. Personal narratives of 20 middle-class Japanese preschoolers aged four and five, and their mothers were analyzed using the Labovian approach (Labov, 1972). Also, using a speech act coding system (McCabe & Peterson, 1991), conversations between the same 20 mother-child pairs were analyzed to study differences in narrative elicitation between mothers of four- and five-year-olds. The findings, which suggest that mothers' interaction styles are indicative of those children's developing narrative discourse skill, are discussed from a Vygotskian perspective (Vygotsky, 1978).

Narrative Styles of Japanese Mothers and Their Children

In one way or another, most developmental theorists address the question of how language, thought, and social interaction are related in a child's life. Depending on the particular focus of each theory, these three aspects of development can be defined and connected differently. It is possible to characterize some theories as cognitive-developmental and others as social interaction. The former theories, represented by Piaget (1959), regard individual cognitive processes as primary in development, whereas the latter view, represented by Vygotsky (1978) and Bruner (1977, 1986, 1990), regard social interaction as primary for development.

It is important to see, in other words, these two approaches to cognitive development, the one as relatively autonomous from language (Piaget) and the other as highly dependent on language (Vygotsky and Bruner), in the light of how the two theories also relate cognitive development and social interaction. Cognitive development is for Piaget relatively autonomous, not only independent of language but also of social interaction. As is the case with language, Piaget has at times acknowledged social interaction as a possible, albeit secondary, factor in development. In contrast, Vygotsky and Bruner view children's participation in social interaction as a privileged kind of interaction with the world, which is a primary factor for cognitive development. In this theory, patterns of cognitive activity and changes in such patterns cannot be understood independently of the social-interactive processes that shape them and from which they emerge. As Cummins (1994) puts it, therefore, "Both first language acquisition and cognitive development are active, constructive processes whereby children generate their knowledge of the world and their linguistic knowledge within a matrix of social interaction" (p. 45).

The present narrative study follows the social interactionist paradigm. Personal narratives order experience by making sense of the general flow of events in a person's life. The origins of narrative style can be traced back to conversations between parents

and children (Sachs, 1979). "Scaffolding" means the temporary support that parents and others give a child to perform a task (Bruner, 1977). In narrative contexts, therefore, children's speech is guided and scaffolded by mothers who initiate and elicit children's contributions about past experiences (Hudson, 1993). Unfortunately, however, data from languages other than English are very limited. To fill this gap, the goal of this study is to examine how Japanese parents guide their preschool children (four- and five-year-olds) in the acquisition of culture-specific styles of narrative. Whereas monologic narrative might present a more cognitive view of narrative development, dialogic narrative such as conversations between mother and child seem to illustrate a more conversational and social-interactive view of narrative development. However, cognitive, conversational, and social-interactional factors interact in a complex fashion in narrative development (e.g., Berman & Slobin, 1994; Nelson, 1989). As explained above, to better understand this complexity, when the social interactionist paradigm is applied to the study of narrative, the bulk of research in this area considers the caregiver, particularly the mother, to be the primary agent who provides a framework for the child to learn a particular narrative style. Specific research questions that can be posed in this context are the following:

1. How do Japanese four- and five-year-olds transform their experiences into narrative? What developments are evident between these two age groups?
2. What, if any, differences in narrative elicitation styles are found between mothers of four-year-olds and mothers of five-year-olds?
3. Is there any relationship between maternal patterns of narrative elicitation and children's developing narrative skill?

The main purpose of this study is thus to explore the relationship between maternal styles of narrative elicitation and the children's narrative development.

Methods

Following the social interactionist paradigm, this study analyzed language development and narrative discourse structure, by looking at how language shapes and is shaped by culture-specific experiences. Twenty Japanese preschoolers of middle-class backgrounds participated in this study, along with their parents. These children consist of the following two age groups:

(1) 10 five-year-old middle-class Japanese children who were in five-year-old children's classrooms in preschool at the time of data collection (5 boys and 5 girls, M= 5;3 years).

(2) 10 four-year-old middle-class Japanese children who were in four-year-old children's classrooms in preschool at the time of data collection (5 boys and 5 girls, M= 4;3 years).

In addition, none of these mother-child pairs had experienced living overseas at the time of data collection.

Procedures

Children's developing narrative skill (monologic narrative production). The first activity examines what developmental differences were exhibited by children in the two age-groups (i.e., developmental aspects). This activity follows Labov's (1972) methodology for eliciting personal narratives, as adopted by Peterson and McCabe (1983) for use with young children. Before eliciting narratives, rapport with the child was established through activities such as drawing pictures. When children were judged to be comfortable with the researcher, they were asked in their native language, Japanese, prompting questions related to injuries, in the manner developed by Peterson and McCabe (1983). This elicitation technique had previously proved to be effective with Japanese children (Minami, 1990; Minami & McCabe, 1991, 1993, 1995). Questions about personally experienced events were asked, such as "Have you ever gotten hurt?" in children's native language, Japanese. However, no specific questions were asked. The narratives elicited from the children were thus without scaffolding and relatively monologic in nature.

To examine the relative narrative competence of young children, adult narratives were also elicited from the mothers. Adults narratives are assumed to serve as a standard of comparison that provides the culturally appropriate, full-fledged, rhetorically well-formed narrative that children are expected to accomplish eventually in telling personal narratives.

Parental styles of narrative elicitation (dialogic narrative production). The second activity analyzes differences in narrative elicitation between mothers of four- and five-year-olds. This activity focuses on both developmental and social interaction aspects. Mothers who participated in this project were supplied with tape recorders and blank cassette tapes and asked to record at home occasions when their children liked to tell them "stories about personal experience, about real events that have happened in the past" (McCabe & Peterson, 1991, p. 226). Mothers were asked to do so in as natural a way as possible, "like you ordinarily behave when you ask your child to talk about past events" (McCabe & Peterson, 1991, p. 226). That is, mothers were asked to elicit interesting past events or experiences from their children, and no more specific instructions or requests were provided.

Coding

All conversations were transcribed verbatim for coding in the format required for analysis using the Child Language Data Exchange System (MacWhinney & Snow, 1985, 1990). Two different coding schemes, (1) high point analysis and (2) a speech act coding system, were used to examine children's developing narrative skill and to derive measures for determining parental styles of narrative elicitation, respectively.

High point analysis for children's developing narrative skill. This coding scheme focuses on structural classification of each clause in monologic narrative from the standpoint of high point analysis. Labov and his colleagues (Labov, Cohen, Robins, & Lewis, 1968; Labov & Waletzky, 1967) designed linguistic techniques to evaluate the narration of experiences within Black English vernacular. Minami and McCabe (1991,

1993, 1995) used an earlier adaptation of Labov's analysis termed high point analysis by Peterson & McCabe (1983). The "high point analysis" coding scheme specifies the role that each clause helps in organizing a narrative. For example, some clauses play the role of descriptive "orientation," which is considered to set the stage for the narrated events, whereas others function as "evaluation" or represent "actions." Detailed guidelines for these categorizations are explained in Appendix A.[1] An example of Japanese preschoolers' monologic narratives is shown below:

Example 1

A Japanese preschooler's monologic narrative (Tamotsu, boy, age 4; 7) [In this extended example, the numbers to the right refer to the minimum unit, and lower-case letters (a-i) in parentheses indicate the beginning of each clause. High-point analysis coding is noted as follows: clauses are categorized as appendage (APP), abstract (ABS), orientation (ORT), action (ACT), evaluation (EVL), and coda (COD), respectively. Also, note that INV means the investigator.)

(a) APP:ABS yoochien de koko ka ne. 1

'In preschool, here, you know,'

(INV: un)

'uh huh'

koko toka ne, 2

'here, you know,'

(INV: un)

koko toka kega shita no. 3

'(and I got hurt) here (also), you know.'

(b) ORT:ACT uun to ne. 4

'Um, you know,'

(INV: un)

chtto, nanka Tamotsu otomodachi ni yuku toki ni, 5

'um when I went to see a friend of mine,'

(c) ACT:EVL koko dosuno to kega shite. 6

'here, with a bump (I) got hurt.'

(INV: un)

(d) ORT:ACT koko ga ne. 7

'Here, you know,'

(INV: un)

kangu masatsu shiteru toki ni. 8

'when (I) was taking a rubdown with a dry towel,'

(e) ACT:ORT kowo shite tara. 9

'when (I) was doing this,'

(INV: un)

(f) ACT:EVL chi ga de ta. 10

'it bled.'

(g) ACT un, sorede teepu hatta. 11

Yeah, (I) put a Band-Aid on.'

(h) EVL uun, kutsushita ga. 12

'Um, (my) sock'

(INV: un)

chi dorake ni natta. 13

'um (my) sock was full of blood.'

i) APP:COD uun to moo nai. 14

'Um, that's it.'

A speech act coding system for parental styles of narrative elicitation. Transcripts of all parents' speech were scored according to a speech act coding system, in order to analyze how speech acts are mapped onto dialogic narrative discourse (Minami, 1994, in press; Minami & McCabe, 1991, 1993, 1995). Figure 1 gives a graphic representation of

coding rules for parental speech. Parental utterances were coded as one of three types: (I) topic-initiation (or topic-switch), (II) topic-extension, and (III) conversational strategies that simply show attention, such as "un" (uh huh) and "huun" (well). Detailed guidelines for these categorizations are explained in Appendix B.[2]

Insert Figure 1 about here.

A representative sample of Japanese mother-child interactions is shown below:

Example 2 Interaction between Sachi (girl, age 5;9) and her mother

Mother: tanjoobi kai de obake yashiki shite.
'At a birthday party, (you) played a haunted house.'

Sachi: chtto **ne**.
'Um, you know,'

(Mother: **un**)
'uh huh'

Sachi: sensei uso tsuiten yan.
'the teacher was a liar.'
koo shite **ne**.
'(She) did this, you know,'

(Mother: **un**)
'uh huh'

Sachi: sensei ga **ne**.
'the teacher, you know,'

(Mother: **un**)
'uh huh'

Sachi: omen kabutte.
'put on a mask,'

koo shite **ne**.

'and did this, you know,'

(Mother: **un**)

'uh huh'

----------(omit segment)----------

Sachi: **datte** sensei **ne**.

'because the teacher, you know,'

(Mother: **un**)

'uh huh'

Sachi: Kumagumi san no heya e itta toki **ne**.

'when (we) went into the Kumagumi (Bear Class) room, you know,'

(Mother: **un**)

'uh huh'

Sachi: konna kao yatta mon.

'(we found her face) was like this.'

(Mother: **ah so**)

'uh really'

Sachi: obake no kao yatta mon.

'(Hers) was a spooky face.'

Mother: obake no kao yattan.

'(Hers) was a spooky face.'

hee!

'Dear!'

Results

Children's developing narrative skill (monologic narrative production). Developmental patterns indicate the following: (1) Compared to adults, young children emphasized a temporal sequence of action[3] with less emphasis on nonsequential information, especially orientation.[4] (2) Although four-year-olds gave proportionately less evaluation than adults, no differences were observed between five-year-olds and adults.[5]

Insert Table 1 about here.

Parental styles of narrative elicitation (dialogic narrative production). In terms of social interaction aspects, mothers of children of different ages were found to use different techniques to elicit children's participation in narrative discourse. That is, in comparison to the mothers of five-year-olds, the mothers of four-year-olds requested more evaluation from their children.[6]

Insert Table 2 about here.

How mothers verbally interact with their young children during narrative elicitation is reflective of those children's developing narrative skill. Across the two age-groups, maternal requests for actions during narrative elicitation were found to be negatively associated with children's action statements in their monologic narrative productions, $r(18) = -.41$, $p = .07$. In other words, the more requests for actions the mother makes during narrative elicitation (i.e., dialogic narrative), the fewer action statements the child provides when talking about past events on his or her own (i.e., monologic narrative). Furthermore, the fewer requests for actions the mother makes

during narrative elicitation, the more action statements the child provides when talking about past events on his or her own.

On the other hand, positive corrrelations were revealed in two domains: (1) quantity and variety--the greater the number and variety of words the child used when interacting with his or her mother, the more words and greater variety of words he or she would use when constructing narratives alone; (2) duration--the longer the mother allowed her child to continue talking per turn during narrative elicitation, the longer the child would continue to talk during a monologic narrative, using a greater number and variety of words (see Table 3).

Insert Table 3 about here.

Discussion

The existence of distinctive maternal styles of narrative elicitation becomes interesting if we can relate them to children's developing narrative skill. The difference in mothers' narrative elicitation strategies seems attributable to five-year-olds' emergent capability of evaluating as much as adults do. In other words, because five-year-olds could provide relatively sufficient evaluative accounts in mother-child interactions, mothers did not need to insist that their children provide evaluative comments.

As reported above, furthermore, maternal requests for information about actions during narrative elicitation were negatively associated with children's statements about actions in their monologic narrative productions. Although this result appears contradictory, mothers have been found to scaffold children's narratives in ways that are consistent with the social interactionist paradigm (Bruner, 1977; Vygotsky, 1978). That is, in mother-child interactions, unless the mother considers that her child gives sufficient action statements, she scaffolds her child by providing requests for actions.

These findings suggest that mothers' interaction styles are indicative of those children's developing narrative skill. That is, in contrast to Piaget (1959), for whom social interaction is only secondary, Vygotsky (1978) and Bruner (1977, 1986, 1990) emphasize the role of the environment in terms of language development. The results of this study thus indicate that narrative discourse development is fundamentally embedded in the process of early social interactions.

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Footnotes

1. Two coders independently coded 20% (i.e., 4 children's transcripts--2 of each age--and 4 mothers' transcripts) of the monologic narrative data, and one person coded the remaining monologic narrative data. Cohen's kappa, an estimate of reliability that corrects for chance rates of agreement, for the main categories of the children's narrative coding (i.e., appendages, orientation, action, evaluation, reported speech) was .94; Cohen's kappa for the subcategories of the children's narrative coding (e.g., abstracts, attention-getting devices, coda) was .89. Likewise, Cohen's kappa for the main categories of the mothers' narrative coding was .95; and Cohen's kappa for the subcategories was .79. To describe the relative strength of agreement associated with kappa statistics, if the range is between .61 and .80, it is labeled as being "substantial"; further, if the range of kappa is over .81, it is considered to represent "almost perfect" agreement (Bakeman & Gottman, 1986; Landis & Koch, 1977). Thus, except for one, which is still in the "substantial" agreement range, all estimates of reliability fall into the range of "almost perfect" agreement.

2. There was one principal coder of the dialogic narrative (i.e., parent conversational) data, but four full transcripts (i.e., 20 percent) were randomly selected and coded by a second person. Intercoder reliability was .97 for the first level (topic-initiation, topic-extension, and statements showing attention) and .87 for the second level (statements about or requests for descriptions, statements about or requests for actions, mother's evaluative comments, and mother's request for child's evaluative comments). One person coded the remaining conversations.

3. Four-year-olds provided proportionately more action statements than adults, $t(28) = 6.04$, $p < .0001$. Likewise, five-year-olds provided proportionately more action statements than adults, $t(12) = 3.68$, $p < .01$.

4. Although marginal, difference was observed between four-year-olds and adults in the proportion of orientation statements, $t(28) = -1.90$, $p = .07$. Likewise, five-year-olds provided proportionately fewer orientation statements than adults, $t(28) = -2.97$, $p < .01$.

5. Four-year-olds gave proportionately fewer evaluation statements than adults, $t(28) = -2.08$, $p < .05$, but the difference between five-year-olds and adults did not reach statistical significance.

6. First, frequencies were analyzed because they represent the impact that loquaciousness might have on children's narration (e.g., Hoff-Ginsberg, 1992; McCabe & Peterson, 1991; Reese, Haden, & Fivush, 1992). Second, proportions were used because they correct for differences in length and allow us to see differing relative emphasis on components of narration. To test for the effect of group and gender, multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVA) were conducted for the major coding categories: maternal requests for descriptions, actions, and evaluations, maternal evaluations, statements showing attention, and initiation. With regard to frequencies, the overall multivariate test did not approach statistical significance, but a subsequent series of univariate analyses of variance (ANOVA) accompanied by Bonferroni Post Hoc tests revealed the following: There was a significant univariate effect of group on maternal requests for child's evaluative comments, $F(1, 16) = 10.37$, $p < .01$ (see Table 2). A Bonferroni Post Hoc test showed that mothers of four-year-olds requested evaluation from their children more frequently than did mothers of five-year-olds. Proportions showed a marginal effect of group, Wilks' lambda = .48, approximate $F(5, 12) = 2.57$, $p = .08$. As Table 2 shows, the effect of group was largely attributable to a marginal effect on maternal requests for child's evaluative comments, $F(1, 16) = 3.56$, $p < .08$. While a Bonferroni Post Hoc test did not reach statistical significance, the mothers of four-year-olds requested proportionately more evaluation ($M = 26.44$, $SD = 10.49$) than did the mothers of five-year-olds ($M = 17.18$, $SD = 8.30$).

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations of Variables Related to High Point Analysis (Proportion)

	Four-year-olds (n = 10)		Five-year-olds (n = 10)		Mothers (n = 20)	
Variable	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Action	55.00	19.65	47.64	23.22	18.47	13.27
Orientation	26.87	20.03	23.67	10.90	38.87	14.18
Evaluation	33.39	22.08	41.24	25.25	46.73	13.15
Appendages	7.01	9.46	4.03	5.56	6.05	4.93
Reported speech	2.64	6.15	2.76	5.83	2.93	4.87

Table 2 Mean Frequencies and Percentages (Standard Deviations) of Mothers' Prompts to Children about Past Events

	Mothers of four-year-olds M	(SD)	Mothers of five-year-olds M	(SD)	F[a] values for main effect of GROUP
Requests for descriptions					
Frequencies	19.10	(8.94)	15.00	(7.35)	1.23
Percentages	13.36%	(3.46)	14.72%	(4.83)	0.53
Requests for actions					
Frequencies	28.80	(15.59)	23.50	(10.01)	0.76
Percentages	20.23%	(8.89)	24.30%	(11.27)	0.78
Requests for evaluations					
Frequencies	32.00	(13.24)	16.50	(7.88)	10.37**
Percentages	24.64%	(10.49)	17.18%	(8.30)	3.56~
Evaluations by mother herself					
Frequencies	22.70	(14.61)	15.40	(10.34)	1.50
Percentages	14.96%	(6.12)	14.69%	(6.62)	0.01
Statements showing attention					
Frequencies	36.20	(31.46)	27.10	(20.85)	0.56
Percentages	24.22%	(17.36)	26.18%	(19.15)	0.06
Initiation					
Frequencies	3.00	(0.00)	2.80	(0.63)	1.00
Percentages	2.59%	(1.46)	2.93%	(1.00)	0.37

~p < .10
*p < .05
**p < .01

[a] Degrees of freedom = 1, 16

Table 3 Correlations between Children's Performance Measures in Two Different Narrative Activities (Four-year-olds and Five-year-olds Combined)

	DUOT	MNDW	MTNW	DNDW	DTNW
MUOT	.46*	.17	.22	.17	.11
DUOT		.41~	.43*	.57**	.62**
MNDW			.95****	.41~	.44*
MTNW				.33	.38~
DNDW					.94****

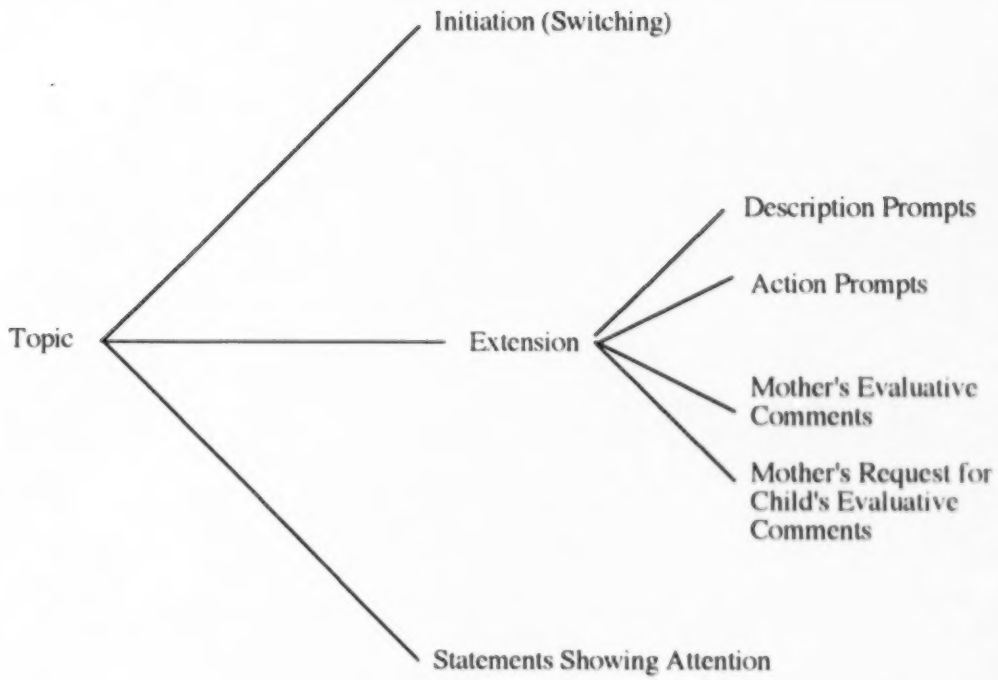
~p < .10
*p < .05
**p < .01
***p < .001
****p < .0001

MUOT: Utterances over turns in monologic narrative
DUOT: Utterances over turns in dialogic narrative
MNDW: Number of different words used in monologic narrative
MTNW: Total number of words used in monologic narrative
DNDW: Number of different words used in dialogic narrative
DTNW: Total number of words used in dialogic narrative

Note: Dialogic (with the mother, with scaffolding)
Monologic (with the researcher, without scaffolding)

Figure Caption

Figure 1. Coding rules for parental speech.


Initiation (Switching)
Description Prompts
Action Prompts
Topic
Extension
Mother's Evaluative Comments
Mother's Request for Child's Evaluative Comments
Statements Showing Attention

Appendix A

Rules of High Point Analysis in Japanese:

Coding Rules and Samples for Monologic Narrative Structure

1. Action: This category applies to specific actions, events, or processes that take place. These are thus temporally restricted narrative clauses, as opposed to free narrative clauses represented by orientation and evaluation clauses. An "action clause" recapitulates a single event that took place at some discrete or restricted point in time (Labov, Cohen, Robins, & Lewis, 1968; Labov & Waletzky, 1967) (e.g., "chuusha shita.": "[I] got a shot." [Tomo, boy, age 5;6]).

2. Orientation: This category refers to statements in which the narrator digresses from the events of a narrative to provide the listener with contextual embedding, such as the setting, people, time, features of environment, conditions, and ongoing behavior in the narrative. Orientation clauses do not occur at a restricted point in time and are thus free narrative clauses. (e.g., "tulip gumi no **toki**.": "When [I] was in tulip class." [Ayaka, girl, age 5;3]).

3. Evaluation: This category is another type of free narrative clauses that tell the listener what to think about a person, place, thing, event, or more globally, the entire experience described in a narrative telling (e.g., "nakanakatta.": "[I] didn't cry." [Minori, girl, age 5;8]).

4. Appendage: This is a composite category including narrative comments that appear either at the beginning (abstracts, e.g., "kaze no toki mo itta koto aru.": "Even when (I had) cold, (I) went." [Minori, girl, age 5;8], attention-getting devices, e.g., "boku shitteru wa.": "I know [something]." [Ryota, boy, age 3;8]) or at the end of the main body of the narrative (codas, e.g., "oshimai.": "That's it." [Akio, boy, age 5;4]).

5. Reported speech: Statements that report character speech by generally reproducing the speech performed. Reported speech is included because it is considered linguistically marked recounting of a past speech event (Ely & McCabe, 1993) (e.g., "ano

ne, 'chuusya shinai hito ehon yonde mattoite kudasai,' tte sensei itteta.": "Well, you know, 'Those who haven't gotten a shot, please read books while waiting,' said the teacher." [Kimi, girl, age 4;6]).

Appendix B

Speech Act Coding System for Maternal Narrative Elicitation Strategies

(I) Topic-Initiation (Switching)

1. Open-ended questions initiating a new topic (e.g., "kyoo yoochien de nani shita no?": "What did you do in preschool today?").
2. Closed-ended questions initiating a new topic (e.g., "suuji awase yatta?": "Did you play matching numbers?").
3. Statements initiating a new topic (e.g., "kono mae Disneyland e itta de sho.": "The other day we went to Disneyland.").

(II) Topic-Extension

4. Open-ended questions extending topics (e.g., "nani ga ichiban suki datta?": "What did you like best?").
5. Closed-ended questions extending topics (e.g., "tanoshi katta?": "Did you enjoy it?").
6. Statements extending a topic (e.g., "nani ka itteta de sho.": "You were saying something.").
7. Clarifying questions (e.g., "nani?": "what?").
8. Clarifying questions that were partial echoes (e.g., "dare ga chu: shite kuretan?": "Who gave you smacks?" after the child said, "chu: chu: chutte yatte.": "Smack, smack, smacked me.").
9. Echoes (e.g., "shiranakatta no.": "You didn't know" after the child said, "shirana katta.": "I didn't know.").

(III) Other Conversational Strategies

10. Statements showing attention, such as brief acknowledgment (e.g., "un.": "Yeah.") and prefacing utterances (e.g., "huun.": "Well.").

Speech patterns that are categorized into topic-extension are further categorized into:

A. Descriptive statements (which describe a scene, a condition, or a state)
"ato Momotaro no hon mo atta de sho.": "Besides there was a book about the Peach Boy."
"denki ga tsuiteta ne.": "There were electric lights, you know."
"jibun de unten suru kuruma?: "Is it a car that you drive on your own?"

B. Statements about actions (which, accompanied by an action verb, describe a specific action)
"janken de saisho kimeta.": "We tossed first by scissors, paper, and rock."

"banana mo tabetan.": "You also ate a banana."

"umi ni ittetan?": "Did you go to the sea?"

"Yuki chan ga arattan.": "Yuki washed."

"nan te kaita no Yukari chan wa typewriter de?": "what did you write with the typewriter?"

C. Mother's evaluative comments

"sore ii ne.": "That's good, you know."

"Aki chan chiisa katta mon ne.": "Because you were small, Aki, you know."

"uso.": "That's not true."

D. Mother's request for child's evaluative comments

"sore doo omou?": "What do you think about it?"

"u chan no doko ga kawaii no?": "What do you think makes the bunny cute?"

"oishi kattan?": "Did it taste good?"